

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 SCI-06 FEAE-00 DRC-01

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R 231312Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3444

INFO AEC GERMANTOWN

IAEA VIENNA 0233

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: UPPER HOUSE DEBATE ON INDIA'S NUCLEAR OPTIONS

1. SUMMARY: A SPOKESMAN FOR RIGHT-WING JANA SANGH PARTY TOUCHED OFF A SPIRITED FOUR-HOUR DEBATE ON GOI NUCLEAR POLICY IN PARLIAMENT'S UPPER HOUSE AUGUST 21. WHILE PRAISING THE GANDHI GOVERNMENT FOR THE MAY 18 UNDERGROUND EXPLOSION, THE JANA SANGH MEMBER CALLED FOR BOTH ATMOSPHERIC TESTS AND THE MANUFACTURE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL SECURITY. HIS STATEMENT DREW QUALIFIED SUPPORT FROM BOTH A CONGRESS AND CPI (MARXIST) MEMBER, BUT WAS REBUTTED BY MINISTER FOR IRRIGATION AND POWER (AND GOI ADVISER ON NUCLEAR ENERGY) K.C. PANT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A SHARP ATTACK IN RAJYA SABHA ON GOI NUCLEAR POLICY, JANA SANGH MP SUBRAMANIAN SWAMI CALLED FOR INDIA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PARTIAL TEST-BAN TREATY (LTBT) AND THE LAUNCHING OF A PROGRAM OF ATMOSPHERIC TESTING LEADING TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT. AFTER COMPLIMENTING MRS. GANDHI'S GOVERNMENT FOR

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ITS MAY 18 SUCCESS, SWAMI CHARGED THAT THE PNE PROJECT HAD IN

FACT BEEN DELAYED FOR YEARS AND INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMS WERE CURRENTLY LAGGING BECAUSE OF GOVERNMENT'S INEFFICIENCY AND IN-DIRECTION. HE RECITED SEVERAL OCCASIONS WHEN NUCLEAR THREATS HAD BEEN EMPLOYED BY THE GREAT POWERS ("WHEN THE SEVENTH FLEET CAME TO BAY OF BENGAL," ETC.) AND SPECULATED THAT GOI MIGHT NOT HAVE HAD TO "RUSH INTO" THE ILL-ADVISED INDO-SOVIET TREATY HAD INDIA POSSESSED THE BOMB IN 1971. CONCERNING THE LTBT, SWAMI DECLARED FUTURE GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT BE BOUND BY "ALL THE IDIOTIC AND SILLY TREATIES YOU HAVE SIGNED" AND WILL "REPUDIATE" THEM. SWAMI SPECIFICALLY ALLEGED THAT THE GANDHI GOVERNMENT HAD INITIALLY PLANNED THE PNE ON THE EVE OF FEBRUARY 15 UTTARTJRA-DESH ELECTION BUT SHIFTED THE DATE TO MAY 18 WHEN A TECHNICAL PROBLEM AROSE.

3. DISTANCING HIMSELF FROM LATTER CHARGE, KRISHAN KANT (CONGRESS) NONETHELESS SECONDED SWAMI'S CALL FOR A REVIEW OF GOI NUCLEAR POLICY. PRAISING THE MAY 18 EXPLOSION AND INDIA'S REJECTION OF NPT ("AN UNEQUAL TREATY"), KANT DECLARED THAT IF INDIA, JAPAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES COULD NOT INDUCE THE GREAT POWERS TO DISARM AT THE NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE IN 1975 OR WITHIN THE NEXT YEARS, INDIA WOULD BE MORALLY JUSTIFIED TO DEVELOP ITS OWN NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

4. RESPONDING FOR THE GOVERNMENT, MINISTER OF STATE OF IRRIGATION PANT REITERATED THAT INDIA WOULD DESIGN HER NUCLEAR PROGRAMS SOLELY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. PANT DESCRIBED CERTAIN PEACEFUL APPLICATIONS OF PNE TECHNOLOGY IN USSR (E.G., CONTROLLING RUNAWAY GAS WELLS) AND MADE PASSING REFERENCE TO U.S. "GAS BUGGY" PROJECT AS FURTHER JUSTIFICATION OF GOI POLICY. PANT WAS VARIOUSLY SUPPORTED BY OTHER CONGRESS MEMBERS, WHO LIKewise UNDERLINED THE PEACEFUL USES TO WHICH THE TECHNOLOGY MIGHT BE PUT.

5. CPI MEMBERS GENERALLY FELL INTO LINE BEHIND GOI POLICY. HOWEVER ONE CPI (MARXIST) ENDORSED THE JANA SANGH CRITICISM AND SUPPORTED INDIA'S RIGHT TO DEVELOP IRBMS.

6. COMMENT: INTERESTINGLY THE CRITICISM AND SUPPORT FOR FULL "NUCLEARIZATION" CAME FROM ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM OF THE UPPER HOUSE. ALTHOUGH FEW MEMBERS ACTUALLY TOOK PART IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEBATE, OTHERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY JOIN IN AND KEEP THE ISSUE OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR OPTIONS SIMMERING BEFORE THE PUBLIC IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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